



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

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News Release

DRO FUGITIVE OPERATIONS TEAM STARTS FISCAL YEAR WITH ARREST OF CHILD PREDATOR

El Paso-area murderers, rapists among 377 aliens removed from the U.S. in FY-04

EL PASO, Texas— The first week of the new fiscal year for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) deportation officers here started with the arrest of a 45-year-old child predator who entered the country illegally after being previously deported for being an aggravated felon.

Miguel Angel Vasquez, a citizen of Mexico, was convicted in 1992 for indecency with a child and was removed from the United States in January 2001 after completing a prison sentence.

Officers believe Vasquez may have re-entered the country as soon as a week later.

He remains in the custody of the U.S. Marshal Service because anyone who illegally reenters the United States after being deported is subject to federal prosecution that can draw a prison sentence upon conviction. Vasquez's preliminary detention hearing is set for Tuesday.

Oct. 1 marks the start of fiscal year 2005 for the federal government. El Paso-based Fugitive Operations Team deportation officers here have already arrested 25 fugitives wanted for immigration violations.

During its first year in operation, the team arrested and removed 377 immigration fugitives. The breakdown on these arrests and deportations includes 18 child predators, 137 criminal aliens, and 222 immigration law violators. The team was established in November 2003.



ICE Deportation Officers escort fugitives and immigration law violators to the Stanton Street Bridge in downtown El Paso before turning them over to Mexican immigration authorities.

“Removing criminal aliens from the United States is a national priority that our team is fully focused on and committed to,” said Director Robert Jolicoeur, who leads the ICE's El Paso Detention and Removal Operations field office. “These absconders, many of whom are high-risk fugitives, are living illegally in our communities. Our Fugitive Operations Team members are dedicated to locating them so they can be deported and make our communities safer.”

The team members have also arrested and removed non-criminal aliens for an array of immigration violations. The team's effort is part of an ICE national initiative to locate, arrest and remove immigration fugitives, especially those with criminal records.

Every day, the team members review files of aliens with final removal orders issued by immigration judges or the Board of Immigration Appeals and identify the persons they will arrest. They also work closely with state and local authorities to identify non-U.S. citizens convicted of crimes that require them to be placed in removal proceedings.

The team has also repatriated numerous Mexican nationals wanted for serious crimes in Mexico, including drug and firearms traffickers, rapists and murders.

“Many of the removed Mexican criminals are Interpol cases targeting fugitives who have tried to seek refuge in the United States,” Jolicoeur said. “Our agents actively seek these fugitives that are believed to be in the El Paso area. It's an important daily task our team takes seriously as it fulfills the ICE mission to protect the nation.”

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security.